

Special Section: Users and Archival Research

Primarily History in America: How U.S. Historians Search for Primary Materials at the Dawn of the Digital Age

Helen R. Tibbo

Abstract

The Primarily History project is the first international, comparative study to examine historians' information-seeking behaviors since the advent of the World Wide Web, electronic finding aids, digitized collections, and an increasingly pervasive networked scholarly environment. Funded by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, Primarily History is a collaboration of the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) and the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII) at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. This article reports on a survey that asked historians teaching American history at sixty-eight top-ranked institutions how they located primary resources for their research. Information-seeking behaviors identified range from traditional print approaches to use of on-line databases, Web searching, and virtual repository visits. Implications are drawn for archives and special collection repositories.

MARC, RLIN, EAD, XML. Archival descriptive practice has undergone an impressive transformation in the past two decades. Where once there was a vision of unique collections best described uniquely,

This study was made possible with funding from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation. I would also like to thank my research partner at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, Dr. Ian Anderson, for his collaboration on the Primarily History project and Dorothy Porter and Teresa Church for the many hours they have contributed to this research.

there are now data structure, content, and value standards. Not so long ago, repositories in the same city could not harmonize their descriptive practices. Today, international committees such as CUSTARD (Canadian–U.S. Task Force on ARchival Description) are reconciling archival description across national borders.¹ Where once all archival descriptive tools were maintained in paper format, there are now immense digital databases² with MARC (MAchine Readable Cataloging) records and repository and consortial Web sites populated with electronic finding aids encoded with the EAD (Encoded Archival Description) XML DTD (Extensible Markup Language—Document Type Definition) or HTML (HyperText Markup Language).³

Although Steve Hensen calls it an evolution, one can argue that the rise of a ubiquitous networked information environment has revolutionized archival descriptive practice. With the adoption and implementation of a series of information standards, the archival community has undergone a fundamental change in perspective, policy, and practice. As with most revolutions, this one did not come without cost. Since the mid-1980s, archivists have expended a good deal of time, money, intellectual effort, and angst to produce electronic access tools for the collections in their repositories starting with MARC AMC records in the 1980s.⁴ By the mid-1990s, pioneering archivists were developing

¹ CUSTARD, an NEH-funded project, will reconcile APPM, the Canadian Rules for Archival Description (RAD), and the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)) to create a set of descriptive rules that can be used with EAD and MARC21. See “The Statement of Principles for the CUSTARD Project” on the Society of American Archivists’ Web site at <<http://www.archivists.org/news/custardproject.asp>> (1 March 2003).

² For example, RLG’s (Research Library Group) Archival Resources database, <<http://www.rlg.org/arr/index.html>> (1 March 2003), and OCLC’s WorldCat, <www.oclc.org> (1 March 2003), which houses over forty-eight million bibliographic records. The Library of Congress makes archival records from RLG and OCLC available free of charge at its *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections* Web site <<http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/>> (1 March 2003). ArchivesUSA from Chadwyck-Healey (UMI Proquest) is another excellent source, which contains pre-1986 NUCMC records not found in electronic format anywhere else.

³ See for example over 4,000 electronic finding aids at the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Web site <<http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv.html>> (1 March 2003) or any of the EAD adopters’ resources listed at the Library of Congress EAD Web site <<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/ead/sitesann.html>> (1 March 2003). Hundreds of other archives have mounted electronic finding aids in either HTML or EAD format that are not listed at LC. Consortia such as the Online Archive of California <<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>> (1 March 2003) have mounted an impressive number of finding guides. For information concerning EAD, see <<http://www.loc.gov/ead/>> (1 March 2003).

⁴ David Bearman, “Archives and Manuscript Control with Bibliographic Utilities: Challenges and Opportunities,” *American Archivist* 52 (Winter 1989): 26–39; Avra Michelson, “Description and Reference in the Age of Automation,” *American Archivist* 50 (Spring 1987): 192–208; Nancy M. Shawcross, “Cataloging: A Case Study of Practices at the University of Pennsylvania: Manuscript Cataloging Using the RLIN AMC Format,” *Archival Issues* 18, no. 2 (1993): 133–44; Alan M. Tucker, “The RLIN Implementation of the MARC Archives and Manuscript Control Format, in *Academic Libraries: Myths and Realities*” (Washington, D.C.: Association of College and Research Libraries, 1984), 69–79.

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what would become EAD.⁵ During the last half of 1990s, most special collection repositories, at least those in institutions such as academic libraries, mounted Web sites, many of which contain HTML encoded finding aids. Today, a steadily growing number of repositories are mounting EAD finding aids on their Web sites with many others planning to do so as resources allow. Some repositories are taking the next step of digitizing primary materials themselves and linking these representations to electronic descriptions of these materials. New tools, such as the *EAD Cookbook*⁶ and inexpensive XML encoding software such as NoteTab,⁷ ensure that a growing corpus of archival finding aids will find their way to the Web.

With the revolution in description well underway, it is time to seek a transformation in access. Mounting finding aids, that is, providing networked access to them, does not make them “accessible,” discoverable, or useful. Optimized “accessible access” can only come with a thorough understanding of user needs and information-seeking behaviors. This article reports on a project that is establishing a baseline of information-seeking behavior for one community, academic historians, at the beginning of the twenty-first century. There is now a large enough corpus of electronic finding aids to benchmark user behavior in a meaningful way. Several questions need exploration. Is the transformation we see in descriptive practice being mirrored in how users look for information? If so, how can archivists optimize the accessibility of their resources and facilitate information retrieval and use? If an information-seeking revolution is not occurring, why is this the case and how can repositories provide effective and efficient access to their resources? To answer these questions, archivists must assess what users want and need and how they go about locating information before spending precious resources on technology projects and digital library design, especially when these require a collaborative effort.

⁵ Steve Hensen discusses how EAD is becoming a part of mainstream archival standards, building on NISTF's development of the MARC AMC cataloging form and his own *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* as a cataloging manual. Steven L. Hensen, “NISTF 2 and EAD: The Evolution of Archival Description,” *American Archivist* 60 (Summer 1997): 284–96; Kris Kiesling, “EAD as an Archival Descriptive Standard,” *American Archivist* 60 (Summer 1997): 344–54; Daniel V. Pitti, “Encoded Archival Description: The Development of an Encoding Standard for Archival Finding Aids,” *American Archivist* 60 (Summer 1997): 268–83; Daniel V. Pitti, “Encoded Archival Description: An Introduction and Overview,” *D-Lib Magazine* 5 (November 1999), <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/November_99/11pitti.html> (1 March 2003).

⁶ *EAD Cookbook*, <<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/ead/cookbookhelp.html>> (1 March 2003).

⁷ <<http://www.notetab.com>> (1 March 2003).

Historians as Information Seekers

In the past two decades, there have been a limited number of studies of humanists' use of technology.⁸ Stone⁹ compiled an extensive review of humanistic information seeking in 1982 that Watson-Boone¹⁰ updated in 1994. Wiberley and Jones¹¹ studied a group of humanists and their information technology use over time. Marcia Bates and colleagues explored how humanists employ on-line searching.¹² Lehmann and Renfro¹³ focused on how humanists

⁸ Roberto Delgadillo and Beverly P. Lynch, "Future Historians: Their Quest for Information," *College and Research Libraries* 60 (May 1999): 245–59; Susan Guest, "The Use of Bibliographic Tools by Humanities Faculty at the State University of New York at Albany," *Reference Librarian* 18 (1987): 157–72; Jan Horner and David Thirlwall, "Online Searching and the University Researcher," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 14 (September 1988): 225–30; Jitka Hurych, "After Bath: Scientists, Social Scientists, and Humanists in the Context of Online Searching," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 12 (July 1986): 158–65; Wendy Longee, Mark Sandler, and Linda L. Parker, "The Humanities Scholars Project: A Study of Attitudes and Behavior Concerning Collection Storage and Technology," *College and Research Libraries* 51 (May 1990): 231–40; Virginia Massey-Burzio, "The Rush to Technology: A View from the Humanists," *Library Trends* 47 (Spring 1999): 620–39; Pamela Pavliscak, Seamus Ross, and Charles Henry, *Information Technology in Humanities Scholarship: Achievements, Prospects, and Challenges—The United States*, ACLS Occasional Paper #37 (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1997); Donald Sievert and Mary Ellen Sievert, "Humanists and Technology: The Case of Philosophers," in *ASIS '88 (Learned Information, 1988)*, 94–99; Helen R. Tibbo, *Abstracting, Information Retrieval and the Humanities: Providing Access to Historical Literature*, ACRL Publications in Librarianship no. 48, (Chicago: American Library Association, 1994); Helen R. Tibbo, "The EPIC Struggle: Subject Retrieval from Large Bibliographic Databases," *American Archivist* 57 (Spring 1994): 310–26; Helen R. Tibbo, "Indexing in the Humanities," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 45 (September 1994): 607–19; Helen R. Tibbo, "Information Systems, Services, and Technologies for the Humanities," *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology* 26 (1991): 287–346.

⁹ Sue Stone, "Humanities Scholars: Information Needs and Uses," *Journal of Documentation* 38 (December 1982): 292–312.

¹⁰ Rebecca Watson-Boone, "The Information Needs and Habits of Humanities Scholars," *RQ* 34 (Winter 1994): 203–16.

¹¹ Stephen Wiberley, "Habits of Humanists: Scholarly Behavior and New Information Technologies," *Library Hi Tech* 9, no. 1 (1991): 17–21; Stephen Wiberley and William G. Jones, "Humanists Revisited: A Longitudinal Look at the Adoption of Information Technology," *College and Research Libraries* 55 (November 1994): 499–509; Stephen Wiberley and William G. Jones, "Time and Technology: A Decade-long Look at Humanists' Use of Electronic Information Technology," *College and Research Libraries* 61 (September 2000): 421–31.

¹² Marcia J. Bates, Deborah N. Wilde, and Susan Siegfried, "An Analysis of Search Terminology Used by Humanities Scholars: The Getty Online Searching Project Report Number 1," *Library Quarterly* 63 (January 1993): 1–39; Susan Siegfried, Marcia J. Bates, and Deborah N. Wilde, "A Profile of End-User Searching Behavior by Humanities Scholars: The Getty Online Searching Project Report No. 2," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 44 (June 1993): 273–91; Marcia J. Bates, Deborah N. Wilde, and Susan Siegfried, "Research Practices of Humanities Scholars in an Online Environment: The Getty Online Searching Project Report No. 3," *Library and Information Science Research* 17 (Winter 1995): 5–40; Marcia J. Bates, "The Design of Databases and Other Information Resources for Humanities Scholars: The Getty Online Searching Project Report No. 4," *Online and CD-Rom Review* 18 (December 1994): 331–40; Marcia J. Bates, "The Getty Online Searching Project in the Humanities Report No. 6: Overview and Conclusions," *College and Research Libraries* 57 (November 1996): 514–23.

¹³ S. Lehmann and P. E. Renfro, "Humanists and Electronic Information Services: Acceptance and Resistance," *College and Research Libraries* 52 (September 1991): 409–13.

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accepted or resisted information technology, and Andersen¹⁴ looked specifically at how historians use technologies such as Web sites for their teaching (e.g., departmental Web sites, mounting educational materials, and visiting other historical Web sites).

A small number of studies have specifically focused on historians, although few have explored how these scholars look for primary materials. In 1982, Margaret Stieg found bibliographies and references in journals or books, specialized bibliographies, book reviews, library catalogs, and abstracts or indexes to be the five most important tools for historians.¹⁵ In 1994, Tibbo compiled a similar list but added library shelf browsing.¹⁶ Most of this research has focused on how historians find published information, but Lisa Odum did examine how art historians use archival sources.¹⁷ Delgadillo and Lynch looked at how Ph.D. students searched for information,¹⁸ but did not really touch on Web matters as their study predated the mounting of most electronic finding aids. Donald Case has explored how historians use and classify information.¹⁹ Charles Cole continues to examine the cognitive activity related to the historical process.²⁰ Trinkle and Merriman have compiled webliographies of Internet sites with resources for teaching purposes and essays on using technology in the history classroom, but these texts are not primarily designed for historical researchers.²¹ No one has yet to explore how historians look for archival collections since the advent of electronic finding aids, thus the need for the current study. Enough electronic finding aids are now available so that it is reasonable to expect at least

¹⁴ Deborah L. Andersen, "Academic Historians, Electronic Information Access Technologies, and the World Wide Web: A Longitudinal Study of Factors Affecting Use and Barriers to that Use," *The Journal of the Association for History and Computing* 1 (June 1998). Available at <<http://mccl.pacificu.edu/history/jahc11/Anderson/Anderson.HTML>> (1 March 2003).

¹⁵ Margaret F. Stieg, "The Information of [*sic*] Needs of Historians," *College and Research Libraries* 42 (November 1981): 549–60.

¹⁶ Tibbo, *Abstracting, Information Retrieval and the Humanities*, 1994.

¹⁷ Lisa Odum, "The Uses of Archival Materials by Art Historians," MSLS Thesis. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998.

¹⁸ Delgadillo and Lynch, "Future Historians."

¹⁹ Donald O. Case, "The Collection and Use of Information by Some American Historians: A Study of Motives and Methods," *Library Quarterly* 61 (January 1991): 61–82.

²⁰ Charles Cole, "Inducing Expertise in History Doctoral Students Via Information Retrieval Design," *Library Quarterly* 70 (January 2000): 86–109; Charles Cole, "Information Acquisition in History Ph.D. Students: Inferencing and the Formation of Knowledge Structures," *Library Quarterly* 68 (January 1998): 33–54; Charles Cole, "Information as Process: The Difference between Corroborating Evidence and 'Information' in Humanistic Research Domains," *Information Processing and Management* 33 (January 1997): 55–67; Charles Cole, "Name Collection by Ph.D. History Students: Inducing Expertise," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 51, no. 5 (2000): 444–55.

²¹ Dennis A. Trinkle and Scott A. Merriman, eds. *History Edu: Essays on Teaching with Technology* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2001); Dennis A. Trinkle and Scott A. Merriman, eds., *The History Highway 3.0: A Guide to Internet Resources*, 3rd ed. (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002); Dennis A. Trinkle, ed., *Writing, Teaching, and Researching History in the Electronic Age: Historians and Computers* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1998).

some historians to be using them. It will be interesting to compare the present results with those of five and ten years in the future.

The Primarily History Project

The Primarily History project is the first international, comparative study to examine historians' information-seeking behaviors since the advent of the World Wide Web, electronic finding aids, digitized collections, and an increasingly pervasive networked scholarly environment. Funded by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, Primarily History is a collaboration of the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) and the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII) at the University of Glasgow, Scotland.²² Through surveys and interviews we are exploring how historians are employing these new tools and techniques. Helen Tibbo from UNC-CH has surveyed 700 historians from sixty-eight²³ U.S. universities in the "doctoral/research universities—extensive" ("Carnegie I") category of the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.²⁴ Ian Anderson from Glasgow surveyed close to 800 historians working at universities in the United Kingdom. Both investigators are following the surveys with in-depth interviews with a subset of these populations. This article reports on findings from the subpopulation of Americanist respondents, that is, faculty at U.S. institutions who are studying the United States and who are likely to be using American repositories and common bibliographic tools.

In addition to investigating how historians look for primary resources and what types of materials they are most likely to use, we are also examining how historians are preparing the next generation of scholars. Specifically, we are looking at what they are teaching their graduate students about information seeking in the digital library environment and how the students are learning to use electronic information retrieval tools. Because today's graduate students are the first cohort of historical researchers who have a significant corpus of electronic finding aids available to them as well as ubiquitous Web access on university campuses, we expect to see them embracing digital resources to a greater extent than their predecessors. Use is not success, however, so we will explore how useful the Web is to them for locating primary resources, how they have learned to use it, and how well they have learned to use it. The third aspect

²² Helen R. Tibbo, "Primarily History: Historians and the Search for Primary Source Materials," *JCDL '02*, 13–17 July 2002, Portland, Oregon (New York: ACM, 2002), 1–10.

²³ While I selected forty institutions for the first survey and thirty for the second, one school appeared in both rounds although no faculty member was surveyed twice. Thus, faculty from sixty-eight rather than seventy universities were involved despite the sampling of forty and a subsequent thirty schools.

²⁴ <<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification>> (1 March 2003).

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of this project is an analysis of how special collections libraries, manuscript repositories, and archives provide access to primary materials and their descriptions. This involves interviews with curators and archivists in 2001 and 2003 as well as analysis of Web sites over this two-year period. This exploration seeks enhanced models for outreach and user education that will facilitate historians and their students in locating and using primary resources.

The Historians Surveys

Selection of Population and Sample

To understand how U.S. historians are searching for primary resources at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we surveyed 700 scholars in two separate sub-studies. This approach allowed for comparisons of response rate and data across two samples of the same population from different times of year to validate findings. (See Appendix A for the survey instrument.) From May to July 2001 we sent surveys to 300 American historians at forty U.S. universities in the “doctoral/research universities—extensive” (“Carnegie I”) category of the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The Carnegie Classification includes 151 institutions within this top ranking, out of 3,941 colleges and universities nationwide. These forty schools represent slightly more than a quarter of the institutions in this stratum. The premise for using tier I schools was that faculty at these research universities would be the most likely historians to be conducting ongoing research. We selected only U.S. historians (i.e., studying the U.S.) in 2001 in an effort to target the group most likely to use materials at archives in the United States.

Because the 151 universities in the Carnegie I grouping reflect a somewhat diverse array of history programs, we stratified the Carnegie tier according to the National Research Council’s (NRC) most recent listing of the top 111 history programs in the U.S..²⁵ The Carnegie classification makes its placements based on the overall quality of research institutions, but the NRC ranks specific disciplinary programs on a number of criteria and breaks its list into quartiles. Reassuringly, all 111 NRC top history programs were within the Carnegie 151 overall leading universities. We randomly selected forty institutions for the 2001 study from within the NRC quartiles and from the remaining forty Carnegie schools. We visited the Web sites of each program for a list of all their U.S. historians. This resulted in a population of 488 faculty members across the forty schools. Table 1 in Appendix C shows the percentage of institutions in each stratum and the corresponding percentage of institutions selected for this study in

²⁵ National Research Council, *Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States: Continuity and Change* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1995).

2001 as well as the number and percentage of faculty in each category. It should be noted that the history departments within the various strata produced differing numbers of faculty. As might be expected, the top two quartiles of history programs contained the highest number of faculty per department with 18.7 and 13.8 respectively. Indeed, large numbers of faculty, and thus the ability to have specialized courses and research programs, may well be some of the criteria for being a top-ranked program. This trend continues with the third- and fourth-level institutions both having slightly over ten U.S. historians each. The forty non-NRC programs trailed the field with 9.4 American historians apiece, with the average number at the forty institutions being 12.2. Appendix B lists the universities selected and their institutional ranking.

We analyzed the overall population for demographic characteristics including institutional affiliation, professional rank (assistant, associate, full professor), and gender. We randomly selected 300 participants from the population and sent them surveys.

In the spring of 2002 (February through May), we replicated this study, expanding the population to include all the full-time, active (not emeritus) faculty listed on the Web sites of additional history programs at thirty Carnegie I institutions regardless of the scholars' subject or geographical focus. This resulted in 880 historians, or slightly more than twenty-nine per institution, for a combined population of 1,368 across the two surveys. We sent 400 historians surveys in 2002 using the same stratification techniques we had employed in 2001. Tables 1 and 2 show the similarity between the 2001 and 2002 subpopulations of historians at various NRC ranks. Because the historians were selected within the 2002 sample across all subject specialties, U.S. historians should be represented at the rate they appear in the overall population. While we did not collect data concerning subject or geographic focus for the entire 2002 population, if U.S. historians appear at the same frequency in this sample as in 2001, 366 or 42 percent of the 880 faculty members would teach American history. Figure 1 illustrates the breakdown of institutions and historians according to institutional rank for the combined survey sent to 700 individuals.

Tables 3 and 4 reveal the distribution of historians at the sixty-eight universities across rank and gender. Irrespective of NRC ranking, history departments are composed of 70 percent male and 30 percent female faculty. Figure 2 shows that over half of history professors are at the highest ranks (full, distinguished, or dean), 80 percent are tenured (down from 83 percent in the 2001 survey alone), and only 20 percent are assistant professors.

Methodology, Response Rates, and Demographics of Responders

Controlling for demographic variables, we mailed paper surveys to 150 historians and e-mailed an electronic version to 150 in May 2001. In June and

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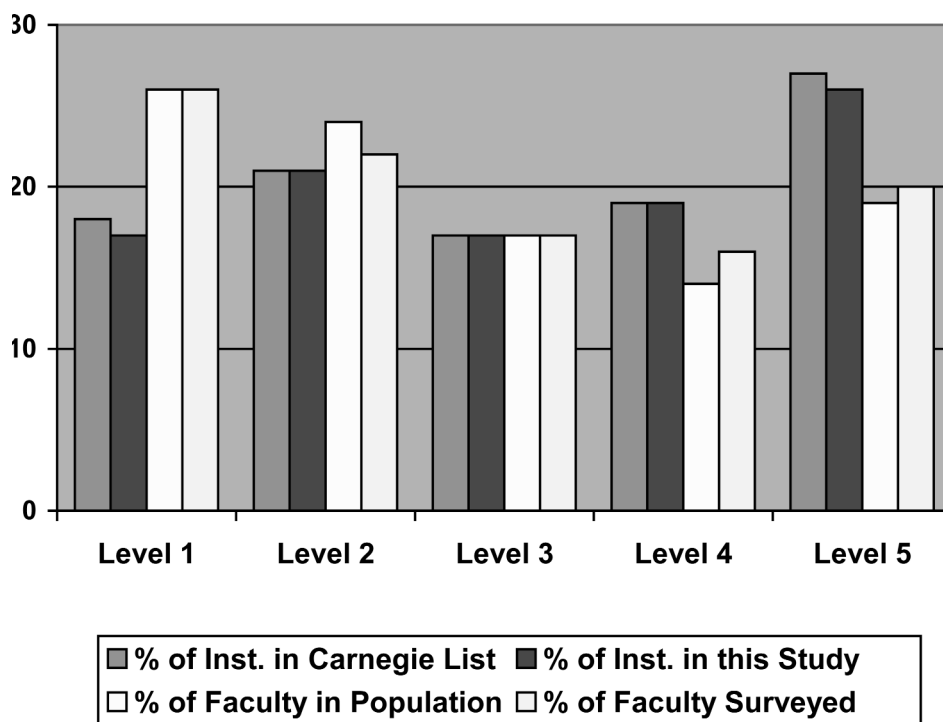


FIGURE 1. Breakdown of 1,368 History Faculty at U.S. Institutions According to Carnegie and NRC Rankings

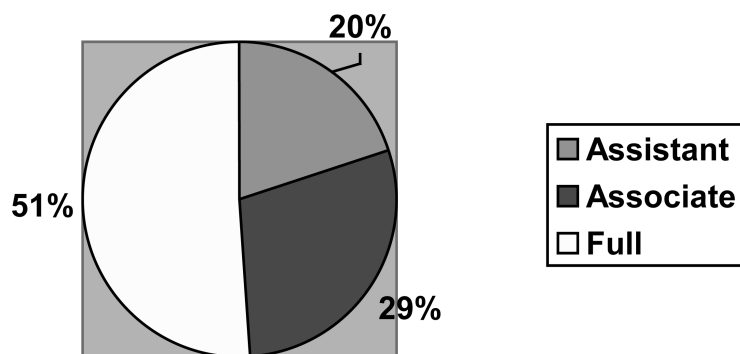


FIGURE 2. Rank of History Faculty at 68 Carnegie I Institutions

July we sent reminders via e-mail. Thirty-four percent of the historians returned surveys in 2001; 52 percent on paper and 48 percent electronically. In several cases historians returned the paper survey after having received an electronic version. Given that 50 percent of the historians received the electronic survey three times and they all received it in electronic form at least twice, the response rate across media reflects a preference for hard copy surveys or at least indicates that historians are more likely to return paper rather than electronic questionnaires.

An additional 6 percent of respondents said they had not done archival work in the past five years,²⁶ bringing the total response rate to 40 percent.

In February of 2002, we mailed a letter of introduction to 400 historians. We followed this in a week with paper surveys to 200 historians while sending e-mail messages to another 200 scholars directing them to a Web form questionnaire. This was different from the 2001 approach when we sent the survey questions as part of the e-mail message. This time the message contained a hotlink to a Web page where the historians could fill in the form. This methodology ensured anonymity but required an extra step; respondents had to follow the link to the form. In March and April we reversed the paper/Web formats across nonrespondents from the 400 historians, with one final all-electronic reminder at the end of April. Tables 4 and 5 show the breakdown of surveys sent by institutional rank, academic rank, and gender.

Forty percent of recipients returned surveys, and another 8 percent indicated that they did not do archival research, improving the response rate 8 percent in the second round. Of the 158 respondents, 105 or 67 percent returned the surveys in print format, and only fifty-three individuals used the Web form. In total, 258 historians responded to the 2001 and 2002 U.S. surveys for an overall response rate of 37 percent (see Table 5). An additional 7 percent indicated that they had not done archival research in the last five years for a combined return rate of 44 percent. Fifty-nine percent of historians responded in paper format. Presumably this rate would have been somewhat higher if the reminders in year one had been sent in paper as well as electronic format. Eighty-one American historians responded on paper forms while seventy-two used a Web form or returned e-mail. Table 6 presents the rank and gender distribution of all history respondents across the two surveys. Table 7 shows survey returns from just the faculty teaching U.S. history.

Findings

What Types of Primary Materials Do American Historians Use?

We initiated the survey by asking historians to think about their most recent research project in which they needed to locate primary source materials, that is, projects for which, from the outset, they did not know where most of the relevant materials resided. Given this context we first asked respondents to indicate the primary resources they used in this project and to rank the three most important types of materials. Data presented in Table 8 show what

²⁶ Duff and Johnson found 11 percent of the Canadian archivists they surveyed did not presently do archival research. Wendy M. Duff and Catherine A. Johnson, "Accidentally Found on Purpose: Information-Seeking Behavior of Historians in Archives," *Library Quarterly* 72 (October 2002): 472-96.

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American historians used most often and most highly ranked in importance for their specific projects. The survey form also prompted respondents for any other categories of materials not on the list.

The list of most often used and most important materials overlaps at several points:

	Most Often Used	Most Important
1.	Newspapers	Newspapers
2.	Unpub. Correspondence	Unpub. Correspondence
3.	Pub. Pamphlets	Unpub. Diaries or Journals
4.	Handwritten Manuscripts	Gov. Papers & Reports
5.	Unpub. Diaries or Journals	Pub. Pamphlets
6.	Gov. Papers & Reports	Gov. Correspondence
7.	Typed Manuscripts	Handwritten Manuscripts
8.	Gov. Correspondence	Typed Manuscripts
9.	Unpub. Minutes	Scholarly Periodicals
10.	Photographs	Photographs

Significantly for libraries and archives and especially digitization and micro-filming projects, many historians view newspapers contemporary to the events they are exploring as essential. Several historians noted in interviews that period newspapers were the only source of information that existed on aspects of their research and that microfilm copies greatly facilitated their work and in some cases were the only remaining evidence to make the investigations possible. Not surprisingly, unpublished correspondence, diaries, and handwritten manuscripts were both highly used and viewed as extremely important for respondents. A bit more remarkable is the high use and evaluation of pamphlets.

How Do American Historians Search for Primary Resources?

The next section of the survey asked historians, still in the context of their most recent project, to indicate what means they used to search for primary resources. The approaches and strategies were categorized as involving print tools, on-line tools, visits to repositories, other contacts with repositories (i.e., mail, telephone, fax, e-mail), and informal means such as talking with colleagues. Figure 3 presents the overall percentage of American historians using various print resources for locating primary materials.

Traditional, Print Approaches

For many historians, the traditional methodologies for locating primary materials remain the most utilized. Ninety-eight percent of the historians

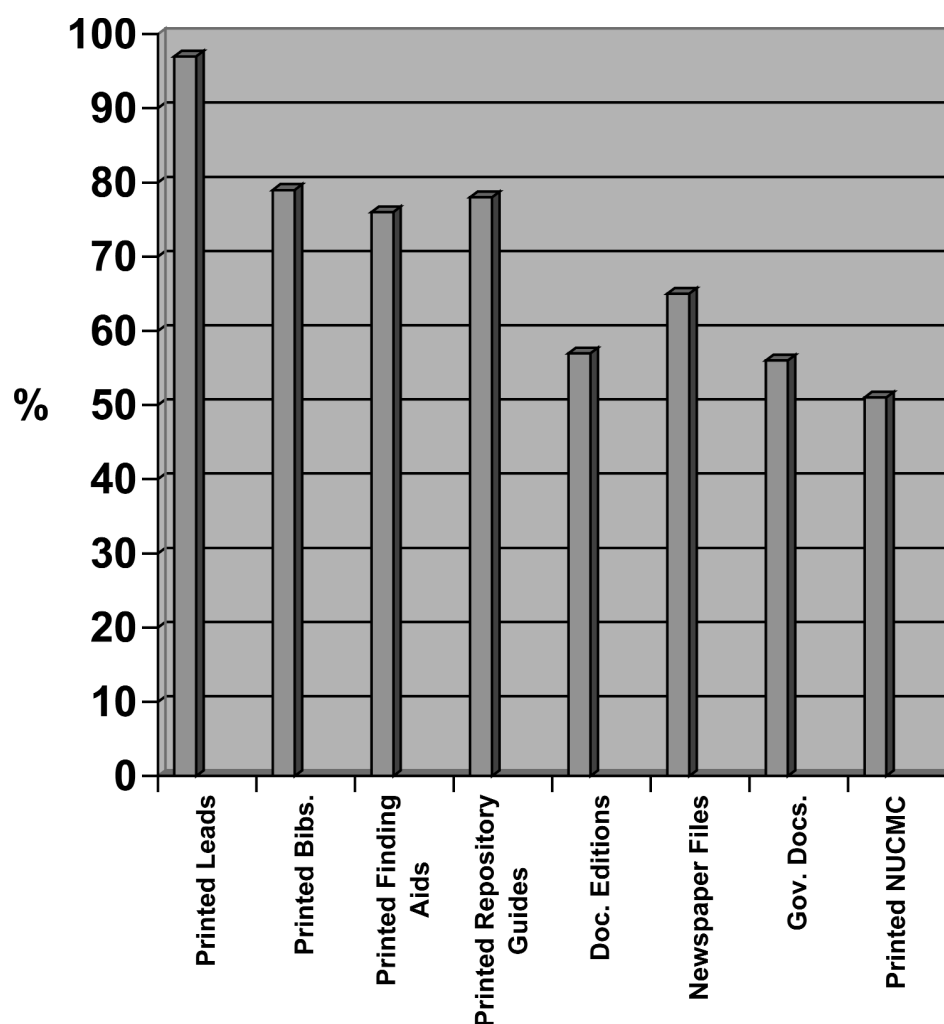


FIGURE 3. Use of Traditional Retrieval Strategies

indicated that they found materials by following leads and citations in printed sources; 79 percent searched printed bibliographies; 57 percent consulted printed documentary editions; 76 percent searched printed finding aids; 78 percent searched printed repository guides; 65 percent used newspaper files to find other materials; 56 percent used government documents in this way; and 51 percent even used the now out-of-date printed NUCMC (National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections) volumes. The Library of Congress has not issued a print volume of NUCMC since 1993 and has been sending all NUCMC records to the AMC (Archives and Mixed Collections) file of RLG's (Research Libraries Group) database since 1986. Table 9 presents data classified by rank of respondent and Table 10 by NRC institutional rank. These detailed break-

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downs do not reveal any trends by level of institution or rank nor, presumably, by length of service and years past initial historical training.

Table 11 organizes the data around the type of history reflected in the researchers' specified project. Three Primarily History team members, all with history or area studies degrees, separately classified the historians' research according to the titles and descriptions they provided. In those cases where there was inter-coder disagreement, we discussed and reconciled all selections. This breakdown is at a level of granularity that provides some useful insights into the nature of tools historians use. We can see that individuals working on biographical projects use collection-oriented tools such as finding aids, repository guides, and NUCMC. Newspapers and documentary editions, often the papers of given individuals, are also quite useful. We can see here that many archival and documentary resources support research on individuals. By comparison, social historians find such approaches less useful.

Electronic Tools and Methodologies

Figure 4 shows the percentage of American historians who use various electronic tools to find primary resources. Use of traditional approaches clearly does not preclude historians employing on-line methods to find primary resources. While we are classifying searching one's own institutional on-line public access catalog (OPAC) as an on-line (and thus recent or innovative) approach to locating materials, it is the only way to find materials, especially published works, within academic libraries today. We can consider this a bridging technology and behavior. Searching one's OPAC is analogous to searching the card catalog from a decade ago. OPAC records resemble old catalog cards in their structure (same data) and presentation (format is often made to look very cardlike) and when OPACs were first implemented, one had to visit the library to search them. Searching the OPAC from the faculty member's office through a campuswide network, however, is a newer behavior that may well have prepared historians to search other institutions' OPACs via the Web. In terms of looking for primary resources, it is surprising that 80 percent of respondents indicated they searched their own library catalog, while only 67 percent said they searched the catalogs of other libraries. After all, few historians have the luxury of having relevant collections housed on their own campus. For example, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Southern Historical Collection holds an impressive array of materials for scholars studying the American South. Yet even at Chapel Hill few of the history faculty focus on the South, as their expertise covers the range of historical types and topics to support the curriculum of a major university.

Perhaps more surprisingly, only 58 percent of the historians said they searched bibliographic utilities such as OCLC's WorldCat and RLG's Union

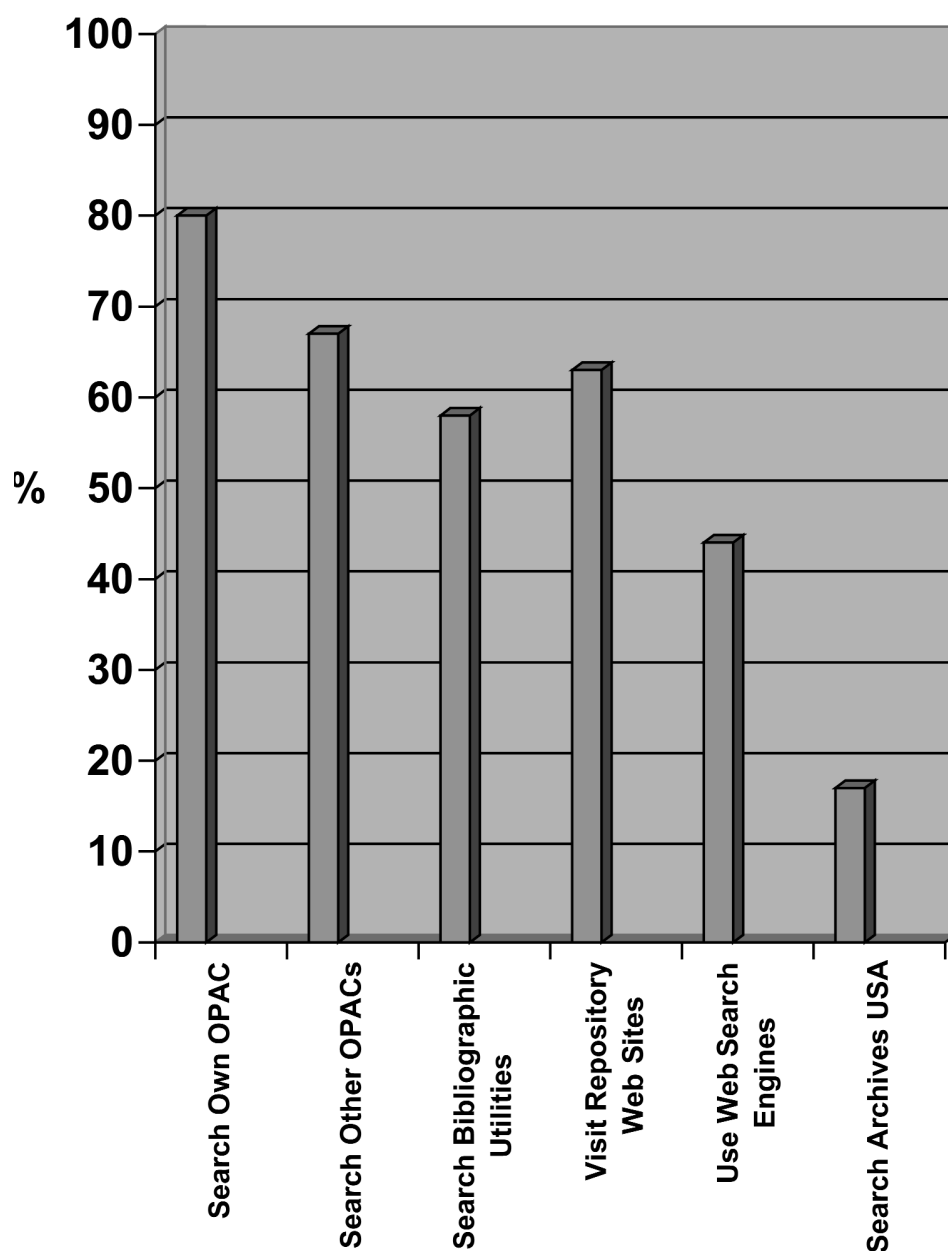


FIGURE 4. Use of On-line Retrieval Strategies

Catalog (formerly the RLIN) database. Almost all academic libraries, and certainly all campuses within the Carnegie I level, have access to at least one of these two products. Both are excellent sources of bibliographic records for manuscript, archival, and government document resources. While the RLG database is expensive for noncontributing libraries, all libraries and individuals with

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Web access can search the AMC file, including post-1986 NUCMC records in RLG via the Library of Congress (LC) Web site. Researchers can also search for archival records in OCLC's mixed materials file through the LC Web site as well. Thus, the relatively low usage of electronic database searching which is both ubiquitous and free on all major university campuses in the U.S. today is disturbing. Historians were more likely to visit archival Web sites and search for descriptions of primary resources for their projects than use the longer standing bibliographic utilities that in many respects resemble OPACs.

Interestingly, 63 percent of historians visited repository Web sites during their research, while only 44 percent used search engines to look for material. Visiting a repository Web site may be a bridging behavior, much like searching one's OPAC. Going directly to a Web site is much like contacting a repository for information, a tried-and-true historian's methodology. In both cases the researcher first identifies an institution likely to contain relevant information, then contacts it, anonymously or through a letter, telephone call, or more recently, electronic mail, to explore its holdings. Searching for material on the Web is, however, a very new behavior, more like database searching, but lacking the structure and assistance one often has when visiting a library to search CD-ROMs or other data files. Initial poor results with Web searching may also be deterring historians from looking for materials this way. While visiting known repository Web sites may be an efficient means of locating materials much of the time, it does not promote finding materials in lesser known collections or small caches of information. Visiting collection Web sites and finding aids does not capture the power of the Web for bringing materials from diverse locations together, but rather makes more accessible materials that the historian would have located anyway with just a bit more effort.

Perhaps most notably, only 17 percent of U.S. historians indicated that they searched the ArchivesUSA database. Along with OCLC and especially RLG, ArchivesUSA is the most comprehensive source of location data on archival collections in research institutions within the United States. Indeed, ArchivesUSA is the electronic replacement and extension of the printed NUCMC volumes, as well as the update of the *Directory of Archival and Manuscript Repositories in the United States*, formerly published by the National Historic Publications and Records Commission, coupled with direct links to on-line finding aids. Because of its cost, some large academic libraries may not provide access to ArchivesUSA, but faculty and students at all sixty-eight institutions can access all post-1986 NUCMC records through either OCLC or RLG and many other records of archival materials at the Library of Congress Web site for free (<<http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/>>).

Table 12 breaks this data down by professional rank of respondent. This is the first time we see a clear differentiation in use of retrieval approaches. Junior faculty are much more likely to search OPACs and the Web than are their more

senior colleagues. Assistant professors exhibit average rates of searching bibliographic databases. Table 13 presents the data by institutional level. Here the most notable feature is that historians at the lowest forty of the Carnegie I cohort exhibit fewer electronic retrieval behaviors. This is particularly true of using ArchivesUSA, conducting Web searches, and visiting repository Web sites. While the expense of ArchivesUSA may help explain this, the lack of freely available Web searching is not so easily explained without recourse to a more qualitative investigation.

Table 14 categorizes the data by type of history. Once again it appears that those historians who were working on a biographical topic used a wider variety of methods to locate materials than did other historians. While we cannot assess the success of their searching—indeed, more searching may indicate poorer results and thus the need to try more approaches—such searching diversity may reflect the fact that bibliographic systems tend to capture proper names fairly well. Social historians may do less bibliographic and Web searching because they are often looking for concepts such as “quality of life” or the “immigrant experience,” not frequently well captured in subject indexing. For these researchers, asking repositories about their collections and if they know of other relevant materials elsewhere may be a more efficient and fruitful approach.

Remote Repository Behavior

Traditionally, historians have contacted repositories before arriving to use materials. This strategy helps to determine if the trip will be worthwhile and can serve to prepare both the researcher and the repository to make better use of the visit. In the past, historians have written, telephoned, and faxed requesting assistance and information. Increasingly, repositories are receiving requests through e-mail for information about holdings and for copies of finding aids and actual documents. With the rise of informative Web sites and electronic finding aids, we might expect to see fewer calls and letters to repositories as the Web sites may fulfill information needs for all but copies of documents. We may also see, as Kristin Martin did at the Southern Historical Collection at UNC, more of the inquiry traffic coming through e-mail.²⁷

Figure 5 presents the percentages of historians who asked for information, requested finding aids, and requested copies of primary documents for the project they referred to in the survey through e-mail, telephone calls, and letters. Fifty percent of the historians in this study e-mailed for assistance with 44 percent calling and 40 percent writing. While e-mail is the most frequently used method for gaining information about repositories among the respondents, it is interesting to look at overlap of approaches.

²⁷ Kristin Martin, “Analysis of Remote Reference Correspondence at a Large Academic Manuscripts Collection,” *American Archivist* 64 (Spring/Summer 2001):17–42.

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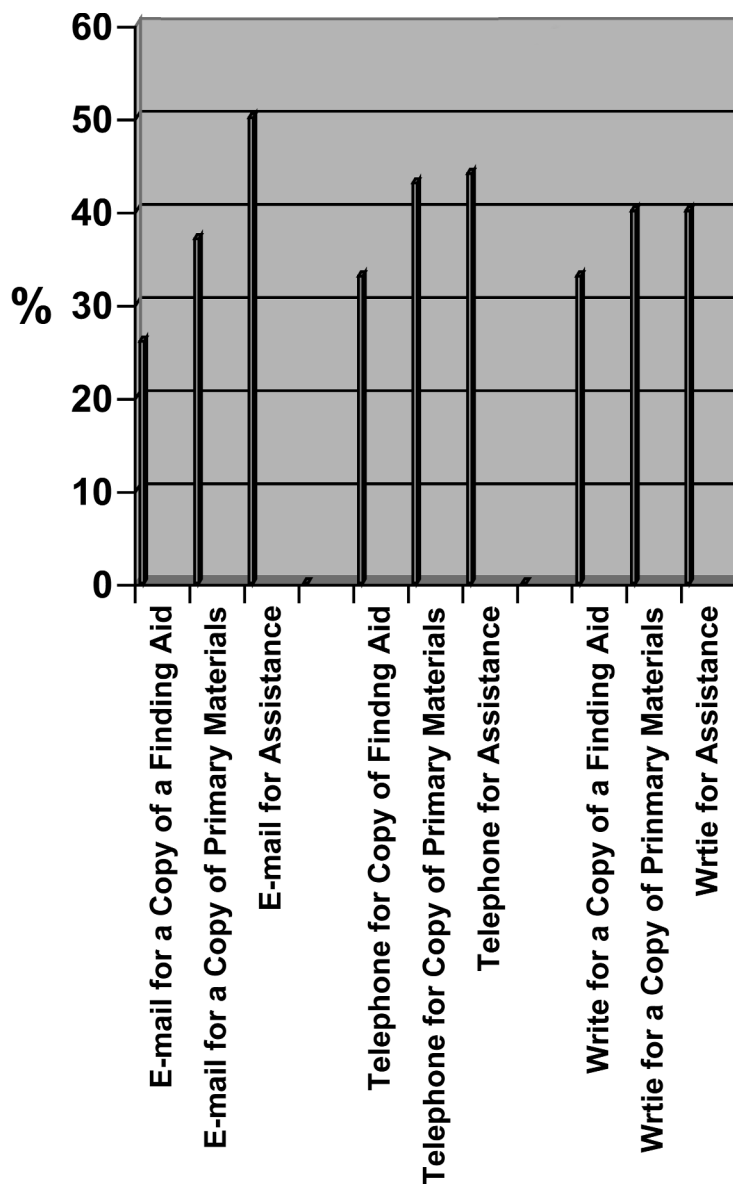


FIGURE 5. Use of Repository Retrieval Strategies

Methodology	Number
E-mailed	76
Telephoned	68
Wrote	56
E-mailed and Telephoned	51
E-mailed and Wrote	44
Telephoned and Wrote	43
Used all 3 Methods	36

One-quarter of the historians wrote, telephoned, and e-mailed for information in the course of their research, although we do not know if they used different methods for different repositories. One-third e-mailed and telephoned. At the same time, fifty-five, or 34 percent, did not contact repositories with any of these advanced means. Twenty-eight of these fifty-five did indicate they visited repository Web sites during their research so perhaps they had their logistical, collection, and finding aid questions answered in this fashion. Another six of the fifty-five searched the Web for archival information, but we do not know if they located repositories or any useful information. Thus, somewhere between fourteen and eighteen percent of these historians indicate no advance information from repositories.

Table 15 presents this data by professional rank of respondent. Here we see senior faculty are almost 20 percent more likely to contact repositories by mail than their most junior colleagues. They also do the greatest amount of writing for finding aids and copies of documents. At the same time, all ranks appear to ask for assistance using e-mail, but now we see fewer individuals asking for materials across the Internet. Indeed, it appears that those individuals who find a repository Web site to ask for assistance also find other useful material there, such as finding aids, and do not have to ask for these materials. Table 16 breaks this data down by research area.

Other Searching Behaviors

Figure 6 and Tables 17 and 18 explore other searching techniques such as browsing stacks in libraries and asking colleagues for assistance. Almost 90 percent of respondents indicated that they used print finding aids while visiting repositories. The use of electronic findings aids in repositories was much lower at 55 percent. Visiting to seek assistance rated highly, especially among junior faculty. Also noteworthy is that faculty at all ranks seek out archivists much more often than they do general reference staff when looking for primary materials. While this is both an appropriate and expected behavior, it speaks to the mismatch of having on-line databases such as ArchivesUSA appearing as part of a

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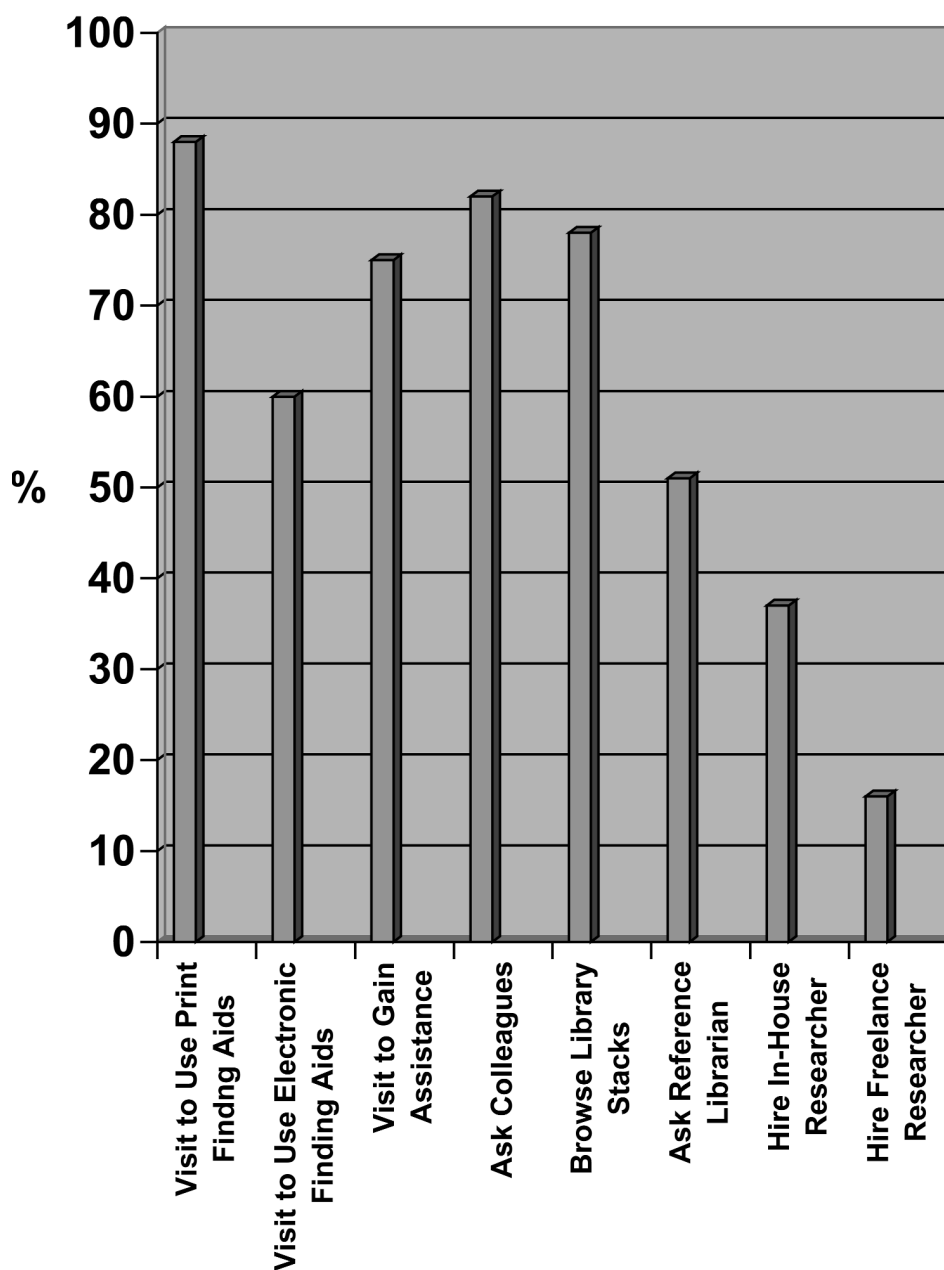


FIGURE 6. Use of Other Retrieval Strategies

main library's electronic resource list without linking to the campus archival repository.

One striking finding is that only 4 of the 153 American historians said they knew they had used EAD finding aids. Sixty-one indicated that they were not sure, while eighty-two said they definitely had not. Six did not supply an answer.

Although most repositories advertise their presence fairly prominently, there is no reason for historians or any other researchers to know when they are using EAD finding aids. We are led to presume that the sixty-one respondents had used on-line finding aids but were not sure if they had been EAD versions. At the same time, it is most likely that the eighty-two who said they had definitely not used EAD tools had not used finding aids on-line at all. Indeed, some of the interviewees have noted that archives Web sites are most useful for information such as hours, parking, and directions. Of the four individuals who indicated that they had used EAD guides, four said they visited repository Web sites; three said they searched the Web; and one person said he had done all three activities.

Conclusions and Further Questions

As with all studies, this one answers some questions but also raises many others. The purpose of the survey reported here was to draw a picture of how historians are searching for primary resource materials at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Because this is the first phase of the project, and it will be followed by in-depth interviews with historians and archivists, we hope to refine our understanding of not only how historians are searching for materials, but more importantly, why certain approaches work well for them and how this can be translated into improved access to primary resources. We will also explore historians' perceptions of the archival landscape and hopefully provide the insight necessary to optimize archival description, access, and outreach.

The clearest finding from this survey is that U.S. historians are using a wide array of primary resources and an equally wide array of methods to locate them, ranging all the way from the tried-and-true strategy of following leads in footnotes to searching the Web. Some evidence indicates that younger scholars are doing more of the latter, but certainly historians from all ranks and from all the universities in this study are using electronic means to locate primary materials. Visiting Web sites of known repositories is a more frequent behavior than using search engines, but at least two-thirds of the individuals surveyed had used the Internet in looking for materials for the project they were describing. Given that few repositories even had Web sites in 1995, let alone electronic finding aids, this is a swift change in information-seeking behavior for the historical community. At the same time, almost all historians use a wide variety of traditional print resources to locate primary materials. The message for libraries and archives is clear. They must maintain access to traditional means of locating resources while building easily navigable Web sites that contain useful information.

What may not be so clear is just what constitutes "useful information" for the archival Web site. In the interviews we have conducted so far, many respondents noted that they went to repository Web sites most often for information such as hours of operation and telephone numbers. While this information is

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useful, it is hardly the sum and substance of a virtual repository. Several of the interviewees did not know about the availability of electronic finding aids. We do not know if this is because the sites they visited did not mount any or if their location on the sites was not readily evident. One way or the other, the message about finding aids being available on-line had not reached these scholars.

People tend to base their information-seeking behaviors on what they expect to find. Archivists professionwide not only need to mount more finding aids and other instructive material so that their Web sites become reliable sources of extensive information, they also need to advertise the presence of this information to their user community. While one may argue that repositories will not know the full range of people who visit their sites, if all repositories in academic institutions actively advertised their Web sites and their features to the historians and other user groups on campus, much would be gained. Even if those scholars and their students did not have reason to use the primary materials at their home repository, they might well visit other archival sites with an enhanced perspective on what they might find. Providing explicit links to databases such as ArchivesUSA and the Library of Congress on-line NUCMC services through OCLC and RLG on the repository Web site, rather than that of the main library, would go a long way toward making local repositories relevant to all historians on their campuses. It is a fairly disappointing finding that many historians still use print NUCMC volumes they can access only from library storage when their libraries hold ArchivesUSA, which contains all the same material in electronic format. From the interviews, we are starting to understand that historians simply do not know of this product. Who better to tell them than archivists? Where better to find easy access to these tools than at the archives?

Along with providing finding aids and databases, archivists and manuscript curators at universities should establish themselves as the campus experts on archival information retrieval. Faculty should not be sending their students to the library to learn how best to find primary resources in databases or on the Web. Historians should be directing students and their own queries, even when the home repository does not contain the primary materials, to the archival staff. Web pages, electronic finding aids, and MARC records—where descriptive practice meets access—must be part of the daily archival product and perspective. The Web site is the virtual front door and a very visible reflection of any repository.

It is time to make the electronic finding aid and archival databases historians' tools. It is not important that historians know they are searching EAD finding aids, but it is important to facilitate the discovery and use of these tools. To accomplish this, repositories must move beyond provision of access and bibliographic instruction. Time and other resources must be allocated to user studies, user education, and especially, outreach within repository budgets. These should not be seen as dispensable add-ons. This is the business of the archival enterprise in the digital age.

Appendix A: Survey

Primarily History: Historians and the Search for Primary Source Materials

The basic premise behind this study is that information systems should be built around user information needs and behaviors. Working within this framework, the specific goals of this survey and the larger research project are to discover how historians are searching for and locating primary source materials; how they are teaching/advising their students to do so; and how archivists and other cultural heritage curators can best facilitate such information discovery. Thank you for your time, effort, and your disciplinary perspective that is critical to this project. WE CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!

A. Research.

Nature of Research.

1. Please provide the following information for your current or last research project in which you needed to locate primary source materials (i.e., you did not start the project knowing where all/most of the relevant materials were located from the outset):
2. Topic of research:
3. Chronological period (e.g., 1880–1910): _____
4. Year you started this research: _____
Year you ended this research or ongoing: _____
5. Main archives, special collections and repositories used in this research:

Primary Sources.

6. Please indicate which types of primary documentation you used in the research you just described (check all that apply in the “used” column). Please specify “other” entries. Of the documentation types you used, rank the three most important in the “rank” column, 1=most important.

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H O W U . S . H I S T O R I A N S S E A R C H F O R P R I M A R Y M A T E R I A L S

Primary Document Type	Used	Rank
Unpublished Material		
Minutes		
Diaries or Journals		
Accounts and Ledgers		
Wills		
Reports		
Correspondence		
Hand Written Manuscripts		
Typed Manuscripts		
Maps and Plans		
Interview Transcripts		
Court Records		
Case Files		
Church Records		
Organizational Records		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		
Published Material		
Diaries or Journals		
Autobiographies		
Correspondence		
Pamphlets		
Flyers		
Treatises		
Catalogues		
Maps and Plans		
Fiction		
Newspapers		
Scholarly Periodicals		
Popular Magazines		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		

Primary Document Type	Used	Rank
Government Material		
Papers and Reports		
Bills and Acts		
Minutes		
Correspondence		
Census Materials		
Other:		
Other:		
Digital Material		
Electronic Databases		
Electronic Texts		
Digitized Images		
Digitized Moving Images		
Digitized Sounds		
Other:		
Other:		
Other Analog Material		
Sound Recordings		
Oral History Recordings		
Film Recordings		
Video Recordings		
Other:		
Other:		
Artifacts and Objects		
Photographs (print or negative)		
Works of Art		
Art Prints		
Glass, Ceramics, Pottery		
Buildings		
Posters		
Other:		
Other Material (specify)		

Searching for Primary Materials.

7. Print Search: In your print searches, did you . . . (Check all that apply for questions 7–14).
 - Follow leads (footnotes, bibliographies, textual references) that you found in books and articles.
 - Search printed bibliographies (e.g., topical bibliography related to your subject, event or personality).
 - Consult published documentary editions (e.g., the *Thomas Jefferson Papers*).
 - Search published finding aids of specific archival collections. (e.g., *Guide to the Cameron Family Papers*).
 - Search repository guides/indexes (e.g., *Guide to the Cataloged Collections in the Manuscript Department of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University*).
 - Search newspaper files.
 - Use international, national, regional, or local government documents (e.g., census files, government statistics etc.) to locate other primary source material?
 - Search the print National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC).
8. Online Search: In your online searches, did you . . .
 - Search your institution's online library catalog (in the library or remotely) to find locally held archival materials.
 - Search the online catalogs from other institutions through the Web to find materials in their archives and manuscript repositories.
 - Search national bibliographic databases such as OCLC's WorldCat or RLIN through your library.
 - Go directly to the websites of repositories that you believed might hold relevant primary materials and searched these sites for online finding aids.
 - Search the Web using a search engine such as Alta Vista or Google to locate relevant finding aids and collections.
 - Search the Archives USA database.
 - Search the archives & manuscript records from OCLC or RLIN via the NUCMC web page at the Library of Congress website.
9. Visits: In your visits, did you . . .
 - Visit an archival/manuscript repository/special collection to use its in-house (printed) finding aids to locate relevant materials within the collection.
 - Visit an archival/manuscript repository/special collection to use its in-house (electronic) finding aids to locate relevant materials within the collection.

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- Visit an archival/manuscript repository/special collection to obtain assistance from an archivist/curator to locate materials at that institution or at other repositories.
- 10. Telephone: In your telephone contacts, did you . . .
 - Ask for remote assistance to locate relevant materials.
 - Request a copy of a finding aid(s).
 - Request a copy of primary materials.
- 11. Writing: In your written correspondence, did you . . .
 - Ask for remote assistance to locate relevant materials.
 - Request a copy of a finding aid(s).
 - Request a copy of primary materials.
- 12. E-mail: In your e-mail correspondence, did you . . .
 - Ask for remote assistance to locate relevant materials.
 - Request a copy of a finding aid(s).
 - Request a copy of primary materials.
- 13. Informal: In your informal searching, did you . . .
 - Ask colleagues.
 - Follow serendipitous leads (e.g., not from expected sources such as colleagues in topical area).
 - Browse library stacks.
- 14. Research Assistance: Did you . . .
 - Use an archive/repository/special collections member of staff to locate primary source material.
 - Use in-house research assistance to locate primary source material.
 - Use a free-lance/external research assistant to locate primary source material.
 - Ask a reference librarian (not an archivist/special collections librarian) for search assistance.
- 15. Are there other means you used to find primary source materials not listed above? If so, please describe:
- 16. Please indicate how you went about finding these sources. Check all that apply:

Primary Document	Print Search	Online Search	Visit	Phone	Write	Email	Informal	Research Assistance
Unpublished Material								
Published Material								
Government Material								
Electronic Material								
Other Analog Material								
Artifacts and Objects								
Other Material								

17. I have used Encoded Archival Description (EAD) finding aids online
 _____Yes _____No _____Not sure
18. How could archives and other cultural heritage repositories better serve your information needs?

B. Teaching.

1. When teaching graduate students to do historical research, either in classroom presentations/discussions or mentoring situations such as being a thesis or dissertation advisor, how often do you mention the following specific strategies for finding archival materials? If you indirectly recommend some of these strategies by telling students to see a reference librarian to learn what tools the library has, but do not specifically mention the various databases and approaches by name, check "never" for the specific items.
- a. Follow leads (e.g., footnotes, bibliographies, textual references) found in books and articles.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- b. Look for and search printed bibliographies (e.g., topical bibliography related to my subject or event or personality).

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- c. Consult published documentary editions (e.g., the *Thomas Jefferson Papers*).

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- d. Search published finding aids for specific archival collections. (e.g., *The Mary Brown Papers*)

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

P R I M A R I L Y H I S T O R Y I N A M E R I C A :
H O W U . S . H I S T O R I A N S S E A R C H F O R P R I M A R Y M A T E R I A L S

- e. Search printed repository guides/indexes (e.g., *Guide to the Cataloged Collections in the Manuscript Department of the William R. Perkins Library, Duke University*)

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- f. Search newspaper files.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- g. Use federal, state, or local government documents (e.g., census files, government statistics, Congressional hearings, etc.)

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- h. Search the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC).

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- i. Search their institution's online library catalog to find locally held archival materials.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- j. Search the online catalogs from other institutions through the Web to find materials in their archives and manuscript repositories.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

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- k. Search national bibliographic databases such as OCLC's WorldCat or RLIN.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- l. Go directly to the websites of repositories that they believe might hold relevant materials and searched these sites for online finding aids.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- m. Search the Web using a search engine such as Alta Vista or Google to locate relevant finding aids and collections.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- n. Search the Archives USA database.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- o. Visit an archival/manuscript repository/special collection to use its in-house (printed) finding aids to locate relevant materials within the collection.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- p. Visit an archival/manuscript repository/special collection to use its in-house (electronic) finding aids to locate relevant materials within the collection.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

P R I M A R I L Y H I S T O R Y I N A M E R I C A :
H O W U . S . H I S T O R I A N S S E A R C H F O R P R I M A R Y M A T E R I A L S

- q. Visit an archival/manuscript repository to obtain assistance from an archivist to locate materials at that institution or at other repositories.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- r. Contact (call, mail, email, fax, etc.) a repository and ask for remote assistance to locate relevant materials.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- s. Contact (call, mail, email, fax, etc.) a repository and have them send a copy of finding aids or primary materials.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- t. Contact (call, mail, email, fax, etc.) a repository and have them send a copy of finding aids or primary materials.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- u. Ask colleagues.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- v. Follow serendipitous leads (e.g., not from expected sources such as colleagues in topical area).

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

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- w. Browse the library stacks.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- x. Use a free-lance/external research assistant to locate primary source material.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

- y. Ask a reference librarian for search assistance.

Situation	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teaching					
Mentoring					

2. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding finding primary resource materials?

C. Professional Data.

1. Please check the title(s) that best represents your current rank:

- ☐ Dean, chair, or depart. head
☐ Distinguished or chaired prof.
☐ Professor
☐ Associate Professor
☐ Assistant Professor
☐ Instructor (non tenure track)
☐ Lecturer (non tenure track)
☐ Emeritus
☐ Other: _____

2. Gender:

_____male _____female

3. Number of years teaching history at a college or university: _____

4. Number of years teaching history at your current institution: _____

5. Primary courses you teach (titles please):

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6. Primary area(s) of research:

Thank you for your participation. Your input will help the archival community better serve a wide variety of researchers and is greatly appreciated.

Again, your participation and responses are entirely confidential. If you have questions about the content of this survey I can be reached at 919.962.8063 or at tibbo@ils.unc.edu.

Please return your completed survey in the enclosed envelope and mail it to:

Dr. Helen R. Tibbo
School of Information and Library Science
201 Manning Hall CB# 3360
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3360

Appendix B: Universities**Primarily History: Universities in the 2001 and 2002 Surveys**Level 1:

1. Columbia University
2. Cornell University
3. Duke University
4. Johns Hopkins University
5. Princeton University
6. Stanford University
7. University of California at Los Angeles
8. University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
9. University of Minnesota
10. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
11. University of Texas at Austin
12. Yale University

Level 2:

13. Emory University
14. Georgetown University
15. George Washington University
16. State University of New York, Stony Brook
17. Ohio State University
18. Ohio University
19. Rice University
20. Syracuse University
21. University of California Santa Barbara
22. University of Connecticut
23. University of Kansas
24. University of Missouri-Columbia
25. University of Washington
26. Vanderbilt University
27. Washington University Saint Louis

Level 3:

28. Arizona State University
29. Boston College
30. Boston University
31. Claremont University

32. Catholic University of America
33. Florida State University
34. Pennsylvania State University
35. Purdue University
36. Tulane University
37. University of Houston
38. University of Notre Dame
39. University of Oklahoma

Level 4:

40. University of Akron
41. Auburn University
42. American University
43. Bowling Green State University
44. Case Western Reserve
45. Fordham University
46. Howard University
47. Kent State University
48. Mississippi State University
49. Texas A&M University
50. Texas Christian University
51. University of Alabama
52. West Virginia University

Level 5:

53. State University of New York, Albany
54. University of Arizona
55. Clemson University (2)
56. Georgia Institute of Technology
57. North Carolina State University
58. Marquette University (2)
59. Saint Louis University
60. Tufts University
61. University of Delaware
62. University of Idaho
63. University of Maine
64. University of Memphis
65. University of New Mexico
66. University of Rhode Island
67. University of Toledo
68. University of Wyoming

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Appendix C: Tables

Table 1 Breakdown of U.S. History Faculty at 40 U.S. Carnegie I Institutions According to Institutional Ranking, 2001.

Institutional Rank	# Institutions in NRC & Carnegie Lists	% Institutions in the Carnegie List	# Institutions Selected in this Study	% Institutions in this Study	# U.S. History Faculty	% Faculty in the Study Population	# Faculty Surveyed	% Faculty Surveyed
1	27	18	7	18	131	27	78	26
2	31	21	8	20	110	23	57	19
3	25	17	7	18	71	15	43	14
4	28	19	7	18	73	15	53	18
5	40	27	11	28	103	21	69	23
Totals	151	102	40	102	488	101	300	100

Table 2 Breakdown of History Faculty at 30 U.S. Carnegie I Institutions According to Institutional Ranking, 2002.

Institutional Rank	Number of Institutions in NRC & Carnegie Lists		Percentage of Institutions in the Carnegie List		Number of Institutions Selected in this Study		Percentage of Institutions in this Study		Number of History Faculty		Percentage of Faculty in the Study Population		Number of Faculty Surveyed		Percentage of Faculty Surveyed	
	N	% of Total	F	%	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	#F	%F	#M	%M
1	27		18		5		17		225		26		102		26	
2	31		21		7		23		216		25		96		24	
3	25		17		6		20		189		21		88		22	
4	28		19		6		20		120		14		56		14	
5	40		27		6		20		130		15		58		15	
Totals	151		102		30		100		880		101		400		101	

Table 3 Professional Rank and Gender of History Faculty at 68 U.S. Carnegie I Institutions by Institutional Ranking.

Institutional Rank	N	% of Total	Assistant Professor				Associate Professor				Full Professor				Totals (% of institutional rank)			
			F		M		F		M		F		M		#F		#M	
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
1	356	26	29	8	35	10	24	7	37	10	43	12	188	53	96	27	260	73
2	326	24	35	11	32	10	37	11	66	20	30	9	126	39	102	31	224	69
3	239	17	26	11	26	11	31	13	42	18	17	7	97	41	74	31	165	69
4	193	14	22	11	32	17	20	10	43	22	13	7	63	33	55	28	138	72
5	254	19	17	7	24	9	25	10	65	26	27	11	96	38	69	27	185	73
Totals	1368	100	129	9	149	11	137	10	253	18	130	10	570	42	396	29	972	71

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Table 4 Professional Rank and Gender of History Faculty at 68 U.S. Carnegie I Institutions by Professional Rank.

Professional Rank	Number at Rank	Percentage of All Professors	Female Faculty			Male Faculty		
			Number at Rank	Percentage of Rank	Percentage of All Profs.	Number at Rank	Percentage of Rank	Percentage of All Profs.
Assistant	278	20	129	46	10	149	54	11
Associate	390	29	137	35	10	253	65	18
Full	700	51	130	19	10	570	81	42
Totals	1368	100	396		29	972		71

Table 5 Surveys Sent by Institutional Rank, Academic Rank, and Gender.

Institutional Rank	No. of Surveys Sent	% of Surveys Sent	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor		Totals (% of institutional rank)			
			F	M	F	M	F	M	#F	%F	#M	%M
1	180	26	16	18	12	20	23	91	51	28	129	72
2	153	22	16	16	17	28	13	63	46	30	107	70
3	119	17	15	11	15	21	8	49	38	32	81	68
4	109	16	12	17	11	23	7	39	30	26	79	72
5	139	20	10	14	14	38	16	47	40	29	99	71
Totals/Ave.	700	101	69	76	69	130	67	289	205	29	495	71

Table 6 Surveys Returned by Institutional Rank, Academic Rank, and Gender. All Respondents.

Institutional Rank	# of Surveys Returned	% of Surveys Returned	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor/Dean		Other		Totals (% of institutional rank)			
			F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	#F	%F	#M	%M
1	56	22	5	9	3	5	11	21	0	2	19	34	37	66
2	56	22	6	4	8	10	5	23	0	0	19	34	37	66
3	50	19	3	5	12	3	3	23	0	1	18	36	32	64
4	41	16	5	6	2	6	4	17	1	0	12	29	29	71
5	55	21	3	4	5	15	4	24	0	0	12	22	43	78
Totals	258	100	22	28	30	39	27	108	1	3	80	31	178	69
%*			35%		35%		37%				39%		36%	

* % of survey recipients

Table 7 Surveys Returned from U.S. Historians by Institutional Rank, Academic Rank, and Gender.

Institutional Rank	# of Surveys Returned	% of Surveys Returned	Assistant Professor		Associate Professor		Full Professor/Dean		Other		Totals (% of institutional rank)			
			F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	#F	%F	#M	%M
1	25	16	2	3	1	4	5	10	0	0	8	32	17	68
2	35	23	4	4	5	2	3	17	0	0	12	29	23	71
3	27	18	1	2	7	3	2	11	0	1	10	37	17	63
4	31	20	2	5	2	5	3	14	0	0	7	23	24	77
5	35	23	2	1	1	8	4	19	0	0	7	20	28	80
Totals	153	100	11	15	16	22	17	71	0	1	44	29	109	71
%*			17%		25%		58%		.5%					

* % of survey respondents

P R I M A R I L Y H I S T O R Y I N A M E R I C A :
H O W U . S . H I S T O R I A N S S E A R C H F O R P R I M A R Y M A T E R I A L S

Table 8 Primary Materials Used and Ranked by U.S. Historians
N=152

Primary Document Type	Used	Rank in Top 3
Unpublished Material		
Minutes	80	12
Diaries or Journals	108	25
Accounts and Ledgers	46	8
Wills	31	3
Reports	95	14
Correspondence	130	37
Hand Written Manuscripts	109	21
Organizational Records	38	17
Typed Manuscripts	97	20
Maps and Plans	55	6
Church Records	20	9
Interviews	24	8
Court Records	22	9
Case Files	13	5
Published Material		
Diaries or Journals	64	15
Autobiographies	106	16
Correspondence	84	13
Pamphlets	111	25
Flyers	60	4
Treatises	41	5
Catalogues	26	2
Maps and Plans	54	7
Newspapers	134	42
Fiction	15	2
Scholarly Periodicals	42	18
Popular Magazines	38	15
Government Material		
Papers and Reports	99	25
Bills and Acts	71	15
Minutes	48	8
Correspondence	79	24
Census Materials	26	16
Digital Material		
Electronic Databases	67	20
Electronic Texts	45	15
Digitized Images	26	11
Digitized Moving Images	2	1
Digitized Sounds	2	1
Other Analog Material		
Sound Recordings	17	1
Film Recordings	15	1
Video Recordings	16	3
Artifacts and Objects		
Photographs (print or negative)	76	17
Works of Art	29	6
Art Prints	11	6
Glass, Ceramics, Pottery	2	1
Buildings	20	4
Posters	20	5

Table 9 U.S. Historians: Use of Traditional Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Academic Rank of Respondent.

Rank of Respondent	# of Respondents in Category		Follow Leads in Printed Sources		Search Printed Bibs.		Consult Printed Doc. Eds.		Search Printed Finding Aids		Search Printed Repository Guides		Used Newspaper Files		Used Gov. Docs.		Printed NUCMC	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Assistant	26	17	26	100	20	77	16	62	21	81	22	85	17	65	17	65	12	46
Associate	38	25	38	100	34	89	20	53	32	84	33	87	20	53	23	61	21	55
Full/Dean	89	58	86	97	67	75	51	57	63	71	65	73	62	70	45	51	45	51
Totals	153	100	150	98	121	79	87	57	116	76	120	78	99	65	85	56	78	51

% = % of rank

Table 10 U.S. Historians: Use of Traditional Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Institutional Rank of Respondent.

Institutional Rank of Respondent	# of Respondents in Category		Follow Leads in Printed Sources		Search Printed Bibs.		Consult Printed Doc. Eds.		Search Printed Finding Aids		Search Printed Repository Guides		Used Newspaper Files		Used Gov. Docs.		Printed NUCMC	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	25	16	25	100	19	76	14	56	17	68	21	84	16	64	14	56	19	76
2	35	23	34	97	29	83	20	57	27	77	26	74	20	57	16	46	15	43
3	27	18	27	100	17	63	13	48	21	78	20	74	17	63	16	59	10	37
4	31	20	31	100	28	90	20	65	27	87	27	87	22	71	20	65	17	55
5	35	23	33	94	28	80	20	57	24	69	26	74	24	69	19	54	17	49
Totals	153	100	150	98	121	79	87	57	116	76	120	78	99	65	85	56	78	51

% = % of rank

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Table 11 U.S. Historians: Use of Traditional Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Research Area of Respondent.

Research Area	# of Respondents in Category		Follow Leads in Printed Sources		Search Printed Bibs.		Consult Printed Doc. Eds.		Search Printed Finding Aids		Search Repository Guides		Used Newspaper Files		Used Gov. Docs.		Printed NUCMC	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Biographical	18	12	18	100	15	83	13	72	15	83	15	83	13	72	15	83	17	94
Cultural	18	12	18	100	12	67	9	50	14	78	13	78	9	50	5	28	8	44
Economic	12	8	11	92	11	92	6	50	10	83	9	75	10	83	8	67	6	50
Political	29	19	29	100	25	86	24	83	24	83	26	90	20	69	16	55	16	55
Social	76	50	74	97	58	76	35	46	53	70	57	75	47	62	41	54	31	41
Totals	153	101	150	98	121	79	87	57	116	76	120	78	99	65	85	56	78	51

* % in Research Area

THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST

Table 12 U.S. Historians: Use of Electronic Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Academic Rank of Respondent.

Rank of Respondent	# of Respondents in Category		Search Own OPAC		Search Other OPACs		Search Bibliographic Utilities		Visit Repository Web Sites		Use Web Search Engines		Search Archives USA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Assistant	26	17	22	85	21	81	15	58	22	85	17	65	5	19
Associate	38	25	34	89	27	71	26	68	29	76	12	32	8	21
Full	89	58	67	75	54	61	48	54	45	51	39	44	13	15
Totals	153	100	123	80	102	67	89	58	96	63	68	44	26	17

Table 13 U.S. Historians: Use of Electronic Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Institutional Rank of Respondent.

Institutional Rank of Respondent	Respondents in Category		Search Own OPAC		Search Other OPACs		Search Bibliographic Utilities		Visit Repository Web Sites		Use Web Search Engines		Archives USA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	25	16	20	80	17	68	17	68	17	68	13	52	3	12
2	35	23	27	77	20	57	19	54	23	66	16	46	4	11
3	27	18	25	93	19	70	18	67	20	74	14	52	3	11
4	31	20	24	77	26	84	18	58	21	68	14	45	9	29
5	35	23	27	77	20	57	17	49	15	43	11	31	7	20
Totals	153	100	123	80	102	67	89	58	96	63	68	44	26	17

Table 14 U.S. Historians: Use of Electronic Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Research Area of Respondent.

Research Area	Respondents in Category		Search Own OPAC		Search Other OPACs		Search Bibliographic Utilities		Visit Repository Web Sites		Use Web Search Engines		Archives USA	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Biographical	18	12	16	89	14	78	15	83	13	72	6	33	3	17
Cultural	18	12	15	83	11	61	11	61	11	61	1	6	3	17
Economic	12	8	9	75	10	83	8	67	10	83	2	17	1	8
Political	29	19	21	72	19	66	14	48	16	55	5	17	6	21
Social	76	50	62	82	48	63	41	54	46	61	12	16	9	12
Totals	153	101	123	80	102	67	89	58	96	63	68	44	26	17

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Table 15 U.S. Historians: Use of Remote Repository Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Professional Rank of Respondent.

Professional Rank	# of Respondents in Category			E-mail Archives to			Telephone Archives to			Write Archives to										
				Ask for Finding Aid		Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance	Ask for Finding Aid		Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance	Ask for Finding Aid		Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance					
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Assistant	26	17			5	19	8	31	12	46	10	39	13	50	8	31	8	31	7	27
Associate	38	25			11	29	16	42	21	55	14	37	14	37	22	58	11	29	12	34
Professor/Dean	89	58			23	26	32	36	43	48	26	29	39	44	34	38	31	35	41	46
Totals	153	100			39	26	56	37	76	50	50	33	66	43	68	44	50	33	61	40

* % in Professional Rank

Table 16 U.S. Historians: Use of Remote Repository Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Research Area of Respondent.

	# of Respondents in Category			E-mail Archives to			Telephone Archives to			Write Archives to										
				Ask for Finding Aid	Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance	Ask for Finding Aid	Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance	Ask for Finding Aid	Ask for Copy of Materials	Seek Assistance								
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%				
Professional Rank																				
Biographical	18	12	6	33	12	67	13	72	5	28	11	61	10	56	6	33	13	72	9	50
Cultural	18	12	2	11	5	28	7	39	5	28	8	44	5	28	4	22	7	39	5	28
Economic	12	8	3	25	5	42	6	50	4	33	4	33	7	58	3	25	4	33	4	33
Political	29	19	9	31	10	34	16	55	12	41	12	41	15	52	13	45	12	41	15	52
Social	76	50	19	25	24	32	34	45	24	32	31	41	31	41	24	32	25	33	28	37
Totals	153	101	30	20	56	37	76	50	50	33	66	43	68	44	50	33	61	40	61	40

* % in Research Area

Table 17 U.S. Historians: Use of Other Repository Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Professional Rank of Respondent.

Professional Rank	# of Respondents in Category		Visit to Use Print Finding Aid		Visit to Use Electronic Finding Aid		Visit to Seek Assistance		Ask Colleague		Browse Stacks		Reference Librarian		Hire In-House Researcher		Hire Freelance Researcher	
	#	%	#	%*	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Assistant	26	17	26	100	20	77	23	89	23	89	23	89	12	46	6	23	1	4
Associate	38	25	32	84	24	63	27	71	30	79	33	87	15	40	14	37	7	18
Professor/Dean	89	58	76	85	48	54	65	73	71	80	64	72	51	57	36	41	17	19
Totals	153	100	134	88	92	60	115	75	124	81	120	78	78	51	56	37	25	16

* % in Professional Rank

Table 18 U.S. Historians: Use of Other Repository Retrieval Strategies Categorized by Research Area of Respondent.

Professional Rank	# of Respondents in Category		Visit to Use Print Finding Aid		Visit to Use Electronic Finding Aid		Visit to Seek Assistance		Ask Colleague		Browse Stacks		Reference Librarian		Hire In-House Researcher		Hire Freelance Researcher	
	#	%	#	%*	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Biographical	18	12	15	83	12	67	14	78	13	72	15	83	9	50	8	44	9	50
Cultural	18	12	16	89	8	44	15	83	16	89	14	78	4	22	6	33	1	6
Economic	12	8	10	83	7	58	9	75	9	75	6	50	8	67	4	33	1	8
Political	29	19	28	97	21	72	26	90	26	90	23	79	22	76	14	48	4	14
Social	76	50	65	86	44	58	51	67	60	79	62	82	35	46	24	32	10	13
Totals	153	101	134	88	92	60	115	75	124	81	120	78	78	51	56	37	25	16

* % in Research Area